

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/988,499
Amendment filed December 23, 2004
Reply to OA dated October 28, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 12, 14, and 29 are currently being considered, none of which have been amended. Claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 12, 14, and 29 stand allowed. Claims 2, 5-10, 13, and 15-28 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter. No new claims have been added. Applicant believes that no new matter has been introduced.

Claims 2, 5-10, 13, and 15-21 stand rejected under the second paragraph of 35 USC 112, as being indefinite. Claims 2, 5-10, 13, and 15-21 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 5-10, 13, and 15-28 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over USP 6,187,229 (**Takayama**) in view of USP 4,632,564 (**Kopernicky**). Claims 2, 5-10, 13, and 15-28 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Accordingly, all pending claims are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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